

## Small Scale Features

Many styles of site furniture exist on the site today. They vary in age and condition and mostly detract from the appearance and setting of the Jefferson Memorial. Different components within the general landscape setting appear to have been added in a piecemeal fashion to suit the immediate needs of the time, rather than fit into a structured management plan for the area. Further research is needed into the original site furnishings, as little is currently known.

The roads around the Jefferson Memorial are designated "Park Roads and Drives", as classified in the Interagency Initiative for National Mall Road Improvement program's "Streetscape Manual," produced in August 1992. This classification, which provides guidance in the future design or restoration of the small scale features, states that,

"These roadways provide direct access to the open spaces, parks, monuments, memorials and museums in the area. The character of the streetscape should generally reflect park-like qualities and landscaping related to the surroundings." (Architectural and Engineering Sub Group, August 1992) The treatment of the roadway around the rectangular grassed area to the south of the memorial is outlined in the Streetscape Manual, but the manual does not deal with the Jefferson site as a whole, as the area immediately surrounding the memorial is considered to be part of the memorial structure itself.

### Trash Receptacles and Storage Bins

There are several styles of trash receptacles at the Jefferson Memorial. Tulip-type trash and recycling receptacles are in the immediate vicinity of the memorial, whereas the wire basket is distributed around the rest of the site. The tulip-type trash receptacle is standard for all downtown parks. Another style of receptacle, made of marble, is located on the north plaza steps. And a fourth type, a rectangular brown plastic receptacle, is located at the refreshment kiosk. There are also five wooden storage bins along the edge of the kiosk pad for use by the concessionaire. The one to the west is approximately 4' x 3' x 12'. The four to the north are the same height and width, and total about 27' in length.

### Lighting

More research is needed to ascertain the historic lighting. In a 1948 photo, one Washington globe light is shown south of the memorial, but it no longer exists. Today there are, however, 12 Washington globe lights along East Basin Drive between the Inlet and Outlet Bridges. There are also eight tall metal poles around the memorial with flood lights mounted on them. There are three poles with ten light fixtures affixed to them to the northwest and three to the northeast. Those to the northeast are located among trees tall enough to mask their huge scale; those to the northwest rise above the trees. There is a pole with four lights to the southwest and one to the southeast, and both are masked by mature trees. Around the stylobate mall there are eight shorter poles of about 12' high with a single flood light mounted on each. These lights were installed in 1972, based on the design of Sylvan R. Shemitz and Associates. (Lorenzetti 1/2001)

The walk to the west along the edge of the Tidal Basin has 3 foot high lighted bollards, but there are none to the east. There are also no lights on the walks through the greater site. At-grade flush-mounted lighting was installed in late summer of 2000, at the seawall at the end of the plaza.

### Signage

The existing signage at the memorial focuses on regulations regarding alcohol, fishing, and especially parking. Parking restriction signs are placed at close intervals around the grass rectangle. The Streetscape Manual states that this issue will be the subject of a separate study; therefore it is not addressed in detail here. The only interpretive information provided at the memorial is found at an information kiosk located on the south plaza. It is entitled "Welcome to Washington," and focuses on the entire mall area rather than on the Jefferson Memorial.

### Barriers/Fencing

Soil compaction adjacent to the paths is apparent and obviously a problem. Post and chain fencing is located at the corners where the circular drive meets the parking lot, and along the west entry road and parking area. The post and chain barriers are set back enough from the path to allow the visitor to wander onto the edges, causing wear. (Prothero and Tepper, 119-121)

### Other

An electrical box rises from the center of the plaza at water's edge.

### Integrity

It is difficult to assess the integrity of the existing small-scale features on the site without knowing more about those that were in place when the memorial was dedicated. In general, the historical integrity of the current features appears to be low. (The above is based on Prothero and Tepper.)



*Wire basket receptacles, abundant parking signs and 1970s concrete planters (which were removed in 2000), photograph ca. 1995*



*Flood lights west of Memorial, 2000*



*Marble trash receptacles, 2000*

<b>Characteristic Feature</b>	<b>Type Of Contribution</b>	<b>LCS Structure Name</b>	<b>IDLCS Number</b>	<b>Structure Number</b>
Flood Lights	Non-Contributing			
Lighted Bollards	Non-Contributing			
Post and Chain Fencing	Non-Contributing			
Regulatory Signage	Non-Contributing			
Tulip and Wire Trash Cans	Non-Contributing			
Washington Globe Lights	Non-Contributing			

## **Spatial Organization**

The Jefferson Memorial occupies the fifth and last of the cardinal sites as detailed in the McMillan Plan of 1901. Two great axes, which were laid down in the L'Enfant Plan of 1792, ran southward from the White House and west from the Capitol culminating at the Potomac River. These axes became the focus for the McMillan Commission's plan as it pinpointed the last of the cardinal points, on the north-south axis, as being the site for a future memorial, thus completing the five point composition for the city center. (See McMillan Plan diagram for the Capital City in history section.)

On a more local scale, the memorial is situated on the south bank of the Tidal Basin at the southeast corner of West Potomac Park. This expanse of open water emphasizes the distance between the memorial and the other elements of the city, giving it a feeling of openness and informality, far removed from the rigidity of the axial location on which it is actually sited. Despite its close proximity to the river, the same park-like setting is not experienced on the south side of the memorial due to the proximity of Interstate 395, a multi-lane highway. This not only blocks the visual link with the river but creates a physical barrier to the open access of East Potomac Park.

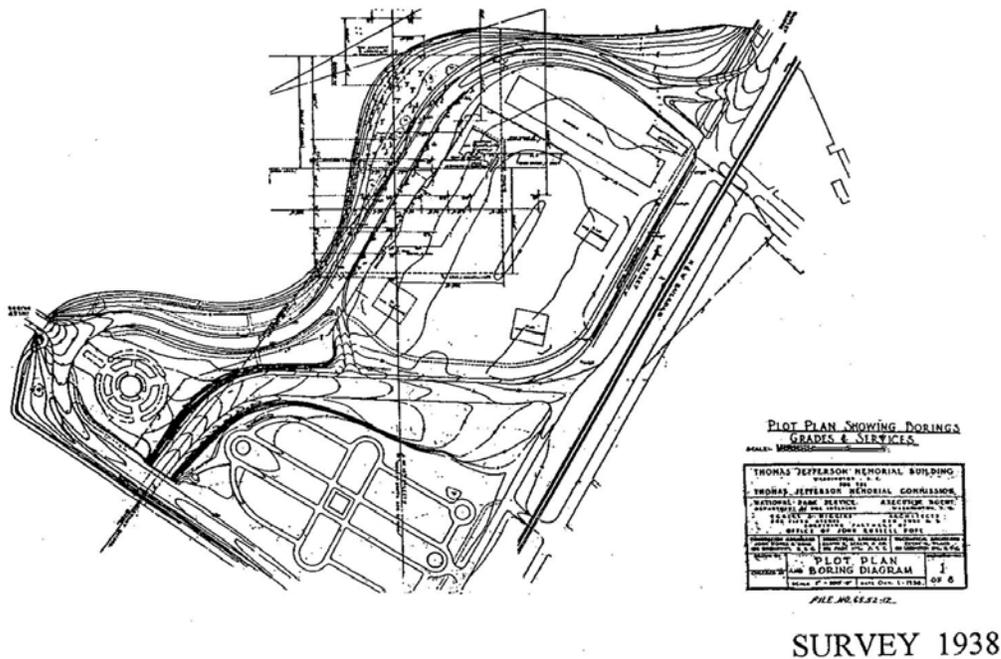
### **Spatial Arrangement within Memorial Grounds**

Within the memorial grounds themselves, the composition of the immediate ground plan becomes less rigid the further the distance from the memorial. The surrounding architectural plantings of shrubs and trees within the circular roadway (terrace mall hedge and the encircling colonnade of zelkova trees), together with the rectangle of grass, give way to the informal parkland composition of trees set in grass.

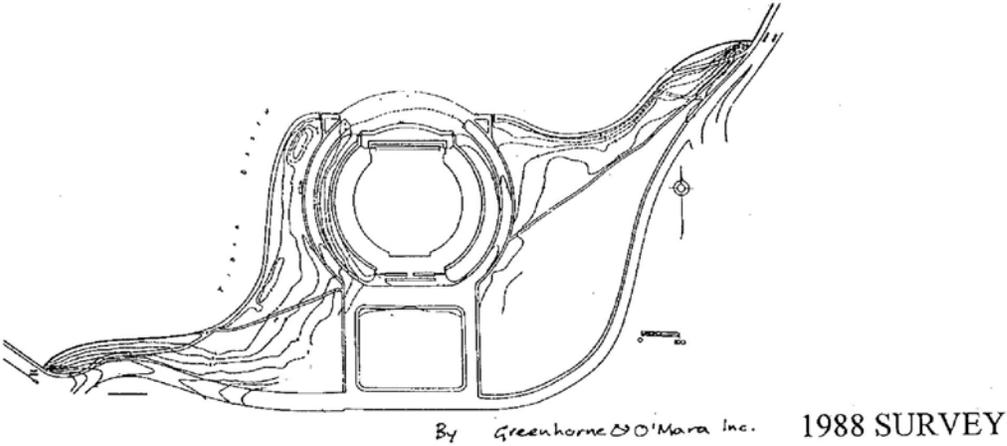
The Jefferson Memorial grounds maintain integrity as one of the cardinal points from the McMillan Plan. For the immediate grounds, the Jefferson Memorial maintains the integrity of its historic spatial organization.

## Topography

The original topography of the site was river and its edge wetlands. Since the land was created through dredging, the memorial site is essentially flat with two rings of retaining walls supporting two terrace levels that make the memorial feel like it is located on a knoll. Some minor grading has been done for the roads and to facilitate drainage. The graphics of the topography before construction in 1938, and in 1988 as surveyed by Greenhorne & O Mara, show the modeling that took place to create the memorial site. They also illustrate the alterations made to the edge of the Tidal Basin to place the memorial directly on axis with the White House. (Prothero and Tepper, 27). Sometime after the dedication, a berm of 3-4' in height was added along the west side of the Tidal Basin, approximately 25' from the sidewalk. It is used to channel water to a drop inlet and has been planted with cherry trees. Settling, a problem since the construction of the memorial, has been addressed at various times over the years, and was addressed in the work done in 2000. Despite the alterations made to address the settling problem and the additional berm, integrity of the topography on the memorial grounds remains high.



*topography of the site before the memorial was constructed.*



*This 1988 survey shows that some changes in the topography took place in the construction of the Jefferson Memorial. In particular, note the changes to the site along the edge of the Tidal Basin.*

<b>Characteristic Feature</b>	<b>Type Of Contribution</b>	<b>LCS Structure Name</b>	<b>IDLCS Number</b>	<b>Structure Number</b>
Stylobate Mall and Terrace Mall Levels, created by retaining walls in wedding-cake arrangement	Contributing			

## Vegetation

The species that would have grown on the banks and the flood plain of the Potomac before reclamation would have included willow (*Salix*), bulrush (*Scirpus*), cattail (*Typha*), lizard's tail (*Saururus*), wild rice (*Zizania*), and other aquatic and bog plants. None of these plants exist in the vicinity today, due to the hard edge of the Tidal Basin wall and depth of water. (Many of these species do exist, however, on the banks of the nearby Anacostia River at the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens.) (Prothero and Tepper, 76)

After reclamation and before the memorial was built, the area of newly created parkland was planted with trees and lawn. Japanese cherry trees were planted on the site in 1912 when the Mayor of Tokyo presented three thousand cherry trees to the city. They have been supplemented by subsequent plantings. (Prothero and Tepper, 103)

The Olmsted planting plan that was installed at the time of construction featured a simple design within the circular driveway that was predominantly evergreen with limited flowering trees and shrubs. It featured clustered groups of trees and shrubs to the north and south of the memorial on both sides of the north steps and on both sides of the south view line. The plan included yews (*Taxus*), American hollies (*Ilex opaca*), Japanese hollies (*Ilex crenata*), abelias (*Abelia grandiflora*), osmanthus (*Osmanthus* sp.), firethorns (*Pyracantha coccinea*) and cotoneasters (*Cotoneaster horizontalis* and the *Cotoneaster horizontalis dammeri*), with dogwoods (*Cornus florida*) and winter jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*) added for color. Because the planting was perceived as "too thin", white pines (*Pinus strobus*) were added to the stylobate mall, and some other replantings and additions took place before the dedication.

Outside of the circular drive, the planting featured small flowering trees with taller shade trees underplanted with grass, and limited shrub and ground cover. The taller trees edged the circular drive and approach driveways, except to the north and east vistas. The other plantings are clustered at the four cardinal points outside of the circular drive, and where the approach roads intersect with East Basin Drive. The plantings focused on dogwood, crabapple (*Malus*), cherry (*Prunus*), and elm (*Ulmus*). Also included were maple (*Acer*), hawthorn (*Crataegus*), plane (*Platanus*), oak (*Quercus*), holly, pine, yew, and periwinkle (*Vinca minor*).

### Changes to the Original Planting Design since Construction

The planting around the memorial today no longer reflects what was specified in the original plans although some of it, namely that on the stylobate mall, has been restored. This restoration was based on the 1942 additions to Olmsted's original planting plan, which included the pine trees on the stylobate mall to correct the original "thin planting" for which Olmsted was criticized.

The original planting was found on two plans, one showing planting inside the circular roadway, the other showing planting outside. These can be compared with today's survey to see how the original designs have been altered. (See Olmsted Planting Plans, ca. 1942. History Section, pg. 14.)

The major designed change in the planting in the memorial's immediate vicinity occurred in the 1970s, when additional yews (*Taxus cuspidata* 'Nana') were planted on the stylobate mall. The ring of zelkovas (*Zelkova serrata*) was planted inside the circular road, where none existed originally. These have grown to maturity and have become an accepted part of the current landscape. However they will not be replaced when they die. Olmsted remarked to F. F. Gillen of the Commission of Fine Arts that:

“Kline had some sketches of planting masses showing some large (deciduous) trees on the lower circular terrace, I didn't discuss planting much, but remarked that the more I studied it the more I was inclined to keep large trees at a considerable distance from the memorial. It is not the kind of thing to nestle among large trees - the columns being only 41 feet tall, trees as big as the comparatively young elms near it would mask much of it in too many important views if not kept at a greater distance than in Kline's sketches.” (Olmsted, July 24, 1941)

In addition to the zelkovas, an evergreen layer of American hollies has been added along East Basin Drive since the 1970s.

The additional yews were the focus of the landscape restoration work that took place in 1993, as part of the stylobate mall repairs. This involved the removal of the historically incorrect planting, which restricted the established vistas, especially those east and west. Original yews, which suffered greatly from the level changes due to the repeated addition of fill over the years to combat settlement, were removed and replaced. Due to the replacement of a collapsed storm sewer, an original white pine and a holly located to the east of the main steps were removed and replaced.

Today, some of the original "as-built" planting remains historically correct in terms of species and location. Much has been lost, however; generally the flowering shrubs and tree species, namely abelia, dogwood, winter jasmine and osmanthus which were planted on the lower terrace. In their place are several yews and a few hollies. Many of the yews have grown to such an extent that they have to be pruned severely to keep them back from the paths. This makes the yews look more formal than intended on the path side, while on the other side it grows in its intended, more natural form. To the south of the memorial, the cotoneasters have been lost, leaving yew (*Taxus cuspidata capitata*) and firethorn. The original periwinkle, which was planted beneath the groups of three pines at the north of the memorial, was replaced with grass fairly early in the memorial's history.

In 1986 the dwarf inkberry (*Ilex glabra compacta*) hedge along the terrace walk was replaced with a hedge of the cultivar 'Shamrock', which exists today. While these plants are generally in good condition, their form is becoming less compact and with further growth will probably start to look 'leggy', making for a less dense hedge.

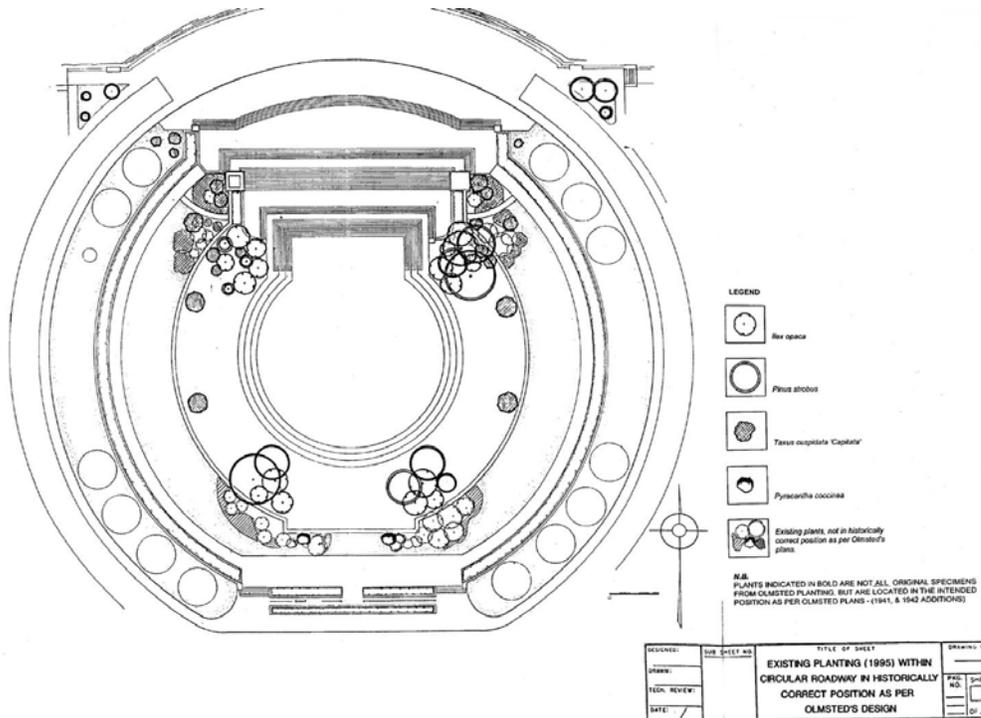
The elm trees, which existed to the southwest of the memorial at the time of construction, were the victims of regrading that took place to raise the ground levels due to settling. (Prothero and Tepper, 103-105)

In 2000 the Bicentennial planting of hollies south of the doors to the lower level were removed. More flowering dogwoods and yews were planted, going back to the original Olmsted plan for the site.

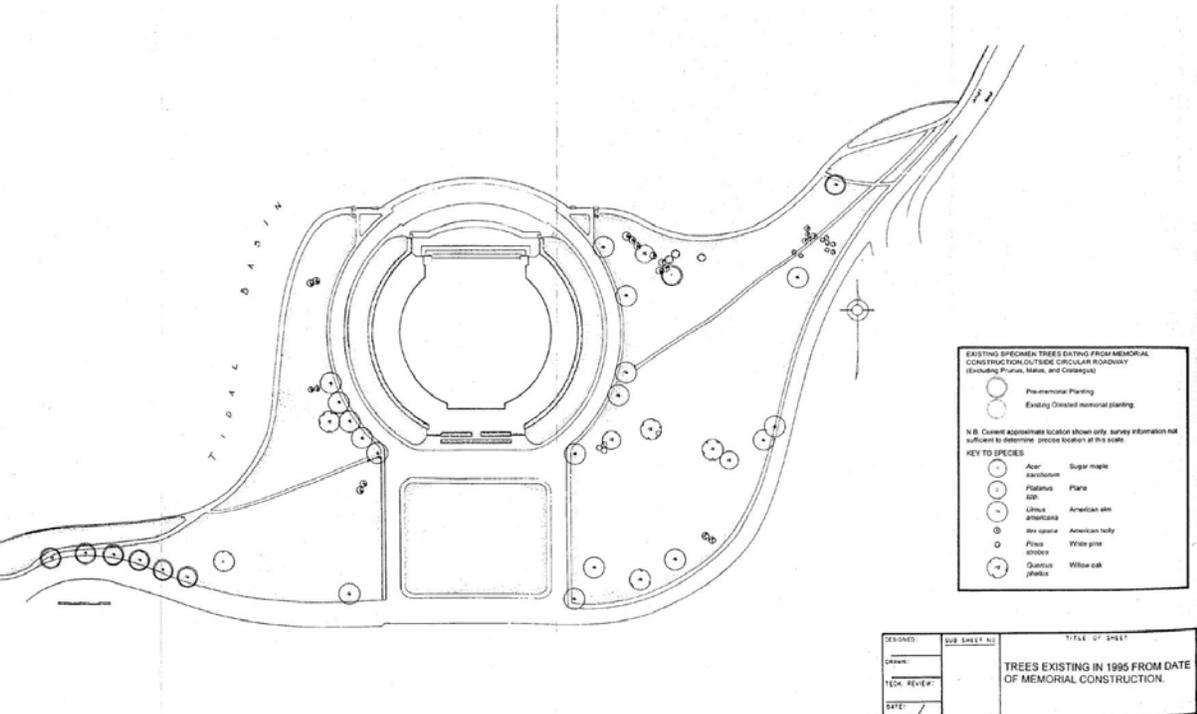
With the recent changes to the plantings, the original concept of the plantings at the Jefferson Memorial grounds has regained high integrity since the original installation prior to the memorial's dedication. The addition of the zelkovas inside the circular driveway, however, represents a decrease in the integrity of the vegetation. (The information above is based on the work of Prothero and Tepper.)



*Plantings at western terrace mall entrance, 2000*



*Existing planting (1995) within the circular roadway that are in historically correct positions as per the Olmsted design, although they are not all original specimens.*



Trees existing in 1995 that date from the construction of the memorial.



Plantings to the south of the memorial in 1948 included pyracantha, hollies, pines, and cotoneaster.





*Vegetation south of the Memorial, 2000*



*Zelkovas along path southwest of Memorial, 2000*

<b>Characteristic Feature</b>	<b>Type Of Contribution</b>	<b>LCS Structure Name</b>	<b>IDLCS Number</b>	<b>Structure Number</b>
Existing Plantings from original Olmsted Plans, including evergreens, dogwoods and winter jasmine inside circular drive, and dogwoods, crabapples, cherries elms, and other shade trees outside of drive	Contributing			
Ring of Cherry Trees around Tidal Basin, originally planted in 1912	Contributing			
Zelkovas inside Circular Drive	Non-Contributing			

## Views And Vistas

(The following is paraphrased from Prothero and Tepper.)

Vistas and views are described separately in this section. Views are classified as being whatever can be seen from a certain place. Vistas, more specifically defined, are consciously designed focused views culminating in a specific point or building.

### Vistas - To and From the Memorial

L'Enfant first conceived the initial inspiration for the dominant axial arrangement of the buildings of primary importance around the Mall (and therefore the formal vistas between them) in his 1792 plan of the Capital City. The Renaissance and Baroque style of European cities inspired his design, as the two great central axes were formed to look south and west across the Potomac.

The gradual departure from his plan in the following years brought about the necessity to develop a new plan for the city center in order that it might regain some cohesive structure.

The departure from the L'Enfant plan, together with the newly created lands reclaimed from the dredging of the river, influenced the McMillan Commission of 1902 to redesign the central area, reinforcing the axes and the vistas. Its plan displayed a confident architectural approach with the familiar five point composition regulating the formal linkage and views of these cardinal points. The perspective view illustrated the intended views between them, despite the southernmost still being a vacant plot of land.

Once the site for the Jefferson Memorial was chosen, there was never any question about its visual relationship with the White House. In fact, President Roosevelt ordered trees to be cut so the view of the memorial from the White House would be enhanced. The visual relationship between the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials was discussed by the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts in January 1943, as is briefly documented in the Site History Narrative section of this report. The subject of such a vista was raised long before then, as can be seen by Olmsted's observations to the National Capital Park and Planning Commission in July 1935. He writes:

"Any monument of great national importance placed on the axis of the White House south of the Washington Monument grounds will have great aesthetic significance and impressiveness only if it is visually related, in an aesthetically satisfactory way, and very strongly and obviously, to the two great axial compositions already largely developed, (a) on the east-west axis through the Capitol, the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, and (b) on the north-south axis, from the White House to the Washington Monument grounds.

"Without such an effective visual relationship directly and strongly impressive upon people moving about on the ground, the mere fact that a great monument happened to occupy a position on the mathematical projection of the White House axis would have only an abstract symbolic significance of relationship with little esthetic importance except perhaps as seen from the air or the top of the Washington Monument." (Olmsted, July 22, 1935)

As previously mentioned in the report, the vista was opened up to the Lincoln Memorial following detailed discussion as to the line of the vista - whether it should run from portico to portico, as favored by F. F. Gillen of the National Park Service, or from the center of the mass of the two buildings as

avored by Fiske Kimball of the Commission of Fine Arts. Kimball's arguments were from a design purist's standpoint rather than the practicality of the visual effect as seen through the casual visitor's eye. He said:

"I must say that I would consider the vista line should be from the center of the Jefferson Memorial to the center of the Lincoln Memorial, instead of in accordance with the alternative suggestion. The mass of each of these buildings will always be more important than any particular point on their facades. Here we have two buildings, each inscribed in a circle, and I do not well see how the vista should follow any other line than a radius of that circle. Certainly this is the case with every similar formal vista abroad, and is already the case with other vistas leading to the Lincoln Memorial." (Kimball, Jan. 14, 1943)

Further correspondence between the commissions, the National Park Service and architects, Eggers and Higgins, highlights the compromise that both effects should be achieved by a gradual widening of the opening. Furthermore, it was agreed that so long as the north shore of the Tidal Basin remained informal, the borders of the vista, at least near the shore of the Tidal Basin, should be of irregular outline. (Prothero and Tepper, 81-83)

The vista between the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials was opened up by the pruning of trees at the end of January, 1943, enabling the visitor a narrow view of one memorial from the other. (Prothero and Tepper, 51)

Today the Lincoln Memorial is barely visible from the Jefferson Memorial. In summer, the top of the Lincoln Memorial can be seen above the trees. The view is slightly more apparent in the winter. The location of the wall at the Korean War Veterans Memorial emphasizes the line between the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, however, this connection is only visible from the air.

The vista to the White House is clearly visible from the steps of the Jefferson Memorial. Similarly, Jefferson's statue is clearly visible from the Truman Balcony of the White House. (Prothero and Tepper, 83)

#### Views to the Memorial

The construction of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial in West Potomac Park and the removal of selected trees has created another framed view of the Jefferson Memorial from the bank of the Tidal Basin. This vista, too, was part of the McMillan Plan, and was realized in 1997, when the FDR memorial project was completed. In the drawing "Cherry Tree Additions" from 1954, it refers to the vista towards the Jefferson from the west. In 'detail B' it states:

"It is believed that this vista serves no useful purpose and that a continuous line of cherry blossom along the edge of the Basin is most important. No tall trees should be permitted in this space."

There are some flowering crab and cherry trees in this vicinity today, but the narrow vista towards the west of the memorial is still maintained. The vista looking towards the east side of the memorial is also apparent.

#### Views from the Memorial

Olmsted's desire to create a long open view towards the Potomac on the south side of the Memorial, as documented in his letter to the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Commission dated August 8, 1941, was

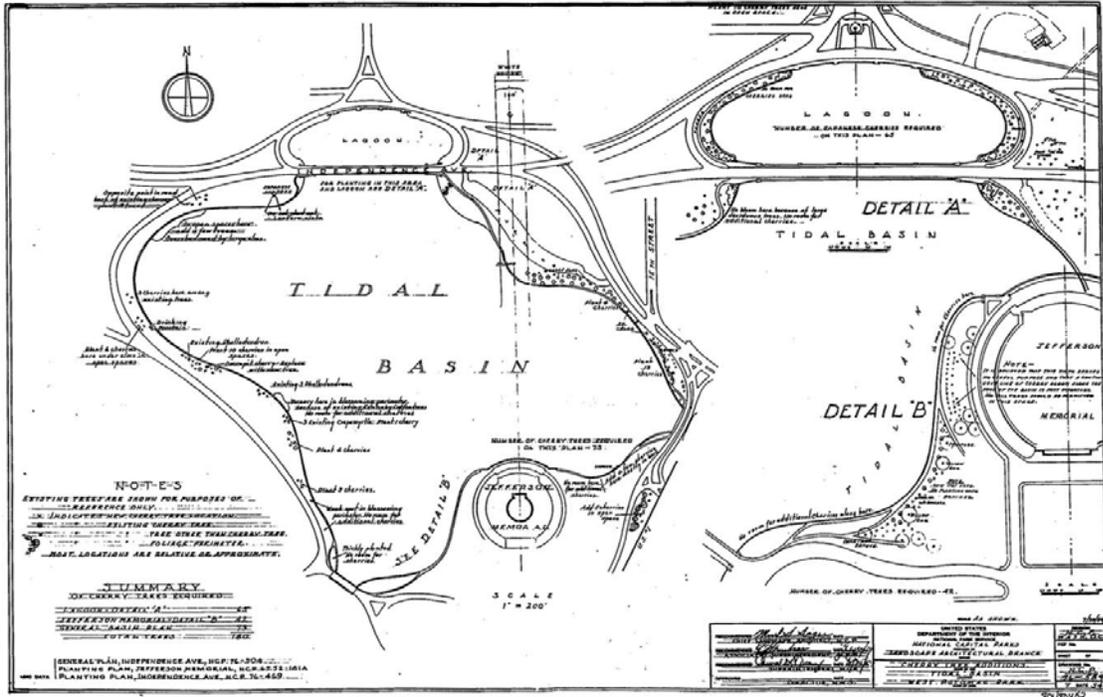
clearly unrealizable even then due to the obstruction of the railroad bridge, present in its current location since 1901. The view was, however, of fairly open parkland (mostly East Potomac Park) towards the bridge and could be seen at least as late as the 1950s.

Now dominating the southerly aspect from the memorial is the elevated Interstate 395, which leads up to the 14th Street Bridge and parallels the railroad bridge. The highway structure considerably foreshortens the original view southward, and the noise and sight of the traffic has a seriously deleterious effect on the visitor enjoyment of the memorial. The intrusion of the road is intensified when standing higher up inside the memorial, or on the stylobate mall. In addition the road, as viewed from the memorial, is not well screened with trees.

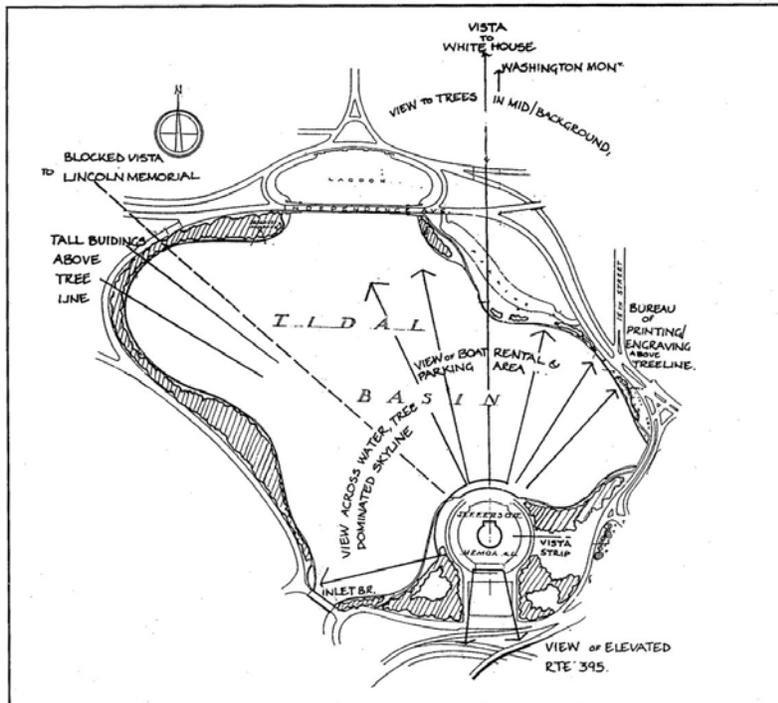
The rectangular grassed area immediately south of the memorial is similarly dominated by the presence of the automobile. Parking to the rear of the memorial was part of the original plan. This visual intrusion, therefore, seems inevitable when considering that the design was conceived before the 'golden age of the automobile' when the car was not seen as a problem as it is today. Surely this, before any interruption by the railroad bridge, would have made Olmsted's ideals of pastoral views towards the Potomac slightly less romantic.

The open view across the Tidal Basin to the north has not changed dramatically since the 1940s in terms of structural changes to the landscape. However, the view due north is interrupted by the parking lot opposite the plaza along the north edge of the Tidal Basin. While this parking area has been in existence since the memorial's construction, the increase in the number of vehicles using the space has made it a conspicuous intrusion in an otherwise pleasant and uncluttered view across the water. (Prothero and Tepper, 86-90)

Today historical integrity of the views and vistas dating to the period of significance remains high. To the north, vistas to the White House and Washington Monument, and the view across the Tidal Basin all remain, along with vistas to the east and west of the memorial. Only the vista to the Lincoln Memorial has been compromised.



"Cherry Tree Additions" (1954), notes that the vista to the west of the memorial - in which there should be no tall trees - should be subservient to the continuous line of cherry trees along the Tidal Basin.



1995 analysis of the existing views and vistas at the Jefferson Memorial.



*View to Washington Monument from Jefferson Memorial, 2000*



*View west to Inlet and ring of cherry trees from Jefferson Memorial, 2000*

<b>Characteristic Feature</b>	<b>Type Of Contribution</b>	<b>LCS Structure Name</b>	<b>IDLCS Number</b>	<b>Structure Number</b>
View across Tidal Basin to Cherry Trees	Contributing			
View south to Interstate 395 and 14th Street Bridge	Non-Contributing			
View West to Potomac River past Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial	Contributing			
Vista North to White House and Washington Monument	Contributing			
Vista to Lincoln Memorial	Contributing			
Vistas to East and West of Memorial	Contributing			